Mountain Weather Forecast

Northwest Highlands

Including Sutherland, Ben Wyvis, Wester Ross, The Cuillin, Glen Affric, Glen Shiel and Knoydart
Forecast valid from 06:00 on Wednesday 20 Dec 2023 until 23:59 on Thursday 21 Dec 2023

Forecast Issued on Wednesday 20 Dec 2023 at 02:53 by Met Office Aberdeen

Confidence: High confidence for unsettled weather and strong winds throughout. High confidence for severe gales or storm force winds on summits on Thursday. There is some uncertainty about the exact timing of frontal rain and associated higher freezing levels later on Friday into Saturday.

Headline for Wednesday 20 Dec 2023: Cloudy, wet and windy. Snow turning to rain later. Bitterly cold.

Mountain weather hazards on Wednesday 20 Dec 2023

Blizzards
Medium Likelihood

Heavy persistent snow
No Likelihood

Storm force winds
No Likelihood

Gales
High Likelihood

Severe chill effect
High Likelihood

Poor visibility
High Likelihood

Thunderstorms
No Likelihood

Heavy persistent rain
High Likelihood

Strong sunlight
No Likelihood

Weather and chance of precipitation at 800m					
Time					
06:00	09:00	12:00	15:00	18:00	21:00
Heavy snow	Sleet	Heavy Rain	Heavy Rain	Heavy Rain	Heavy Rain
Precipitation probability					
50%	80%	90%	>95%	80%	>95%

Forecast for Wednesday 20 Dec 2023

Weather: Snow showers overnight will become less frequent in the early hours. A band of persistent and at times heavy, driving rain arrives from the west before sunrise and lasts all day. This initially falling as snow above 600m, turning to rain from late morning. Cloudy throughout. The worst of the conditions for western upslopes.

Chance of cloud-free hill tops above 800m: 40% at first falling to less than 10% before sunrise.

Low cloud and visibility: Widespread persistent low cloud arriving before sunrise and lasting all day, with bases around 500 to 700m with patches lower down in west. Poor visibility in association with snow and later rain.

Check our weather forecast every day to get the most accurate and up to date information
https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/specialist-forecasts/mountain
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Forecast for Wednesday 20 Dec 2023

Height (m)	Wind Speed mean/gusts (mph) Wind Direction (blowing from)						
	06:00	09:00	12:00	15:00	18:00	21:00	00:00
1000	34/40 W	32/37 SW	38/46 W	39/49 W	42/53 W	43/55 W	53/68 W
900	33/38 W	29/34 SW	35/44 W	37/47 W	40/51 W	41/53 W	50/65 W
600	23/28 W	19/23 SW	23/32 W	26/36 W	29/39 W	29/41 W	36/51 W
300	6/30 W	1/21 W	7/33 W	10/37 W	10/39 W	11/42 W	13/51 W
Glen	15/27 W	1/9 NW	13/28 W	16/32 W	18/36 W	17/35 W	23/45 W

Height (m)	Temperature / Feels Like (°C)						
	06:00	09:00	12:00	15:00	18:00	21:00	00:00
1000	-3/-12	-1/-9	2/-6	3/-5	3/-4	3/-5	3/-5
900	-2/-11	0/-8	3/-5	4/-4	4/-3	3/-4	4/-4
600	1/-6	2/-4	5/-1	6/0	6/0	6/-0	6/-1
300	2/-0	3/2	6/4	7/4	7/4	7/4	7/4
Glen	6/2	5/4	9/6	9/6	9/6	10/6	10/6
Freezing Level*	600m	1100m	1400m	1500m	1600m	1500m	1600m

**Level above which ground is expected to be frozen/snow is expected to settle.*

Met Office Aberdeen Meteorologist's View

Gusts in excess of 50mph will make progress difficult, particularly over summits and ridges. A combination of strong winds, low cloud and persistent snow turning to rain will give a significant wind chill.

Forecast for Thursday 21 Dec 2023

Weather: Winds strengthening overnight to become widespread west-north-westerly gales to low levels, with severe gales or storm force winds on summits. These easing somewhat through the afternoon and evening. Widespread rain and low cloud clearing in the early hours. Scattered heavy showers follow throughout the day, soon turning to snow with the freezing level falling to 400-600m by midday.

Maximum wind: West or northwesterly winds with average speeds widely 40-50mph and gusts of 80mph through the morning, reducing to means of widely 30-35mph and gusts of 55-60mph in the afternoon and evening.

Chance of cloud-free hill tops above 800m: 50% falling to 25% in the evening as more frequent showers arrive.

Low cloud and visibility: Cloud amounts variable and fast-changing in showers, with broken cloud bases frequently 600-800m and very poor visibilities in showers. Some bursts of excellent visibility outside of showers.

Temperature: **Glens:** Plus 7 Celsius becoming Plus 3 Celsius.
At 800m: Plus 1 Celsius becoming Minus 4 Celsius.
Freezing level: 800-1000m soon becoming 400-600m.

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